

SALSBURY-BALLAD.

With the Learned COMMENTARIES of a Friend to the Authors Memory.

The First PART.



Salisbury People, give ear to my Song,
And attention unto my new Ditty:
For it is in the praise of your River Avon,
Of your Bishop, your Church and your City.

And you Maior and Aldermen all on a row,
Who govern that watered Mead,
First listen a while, upon your tip-toe,
Then carry this home and read.

Therein you may find many an excellent Lore,
That unto your Wives you may teach;
Though perhaps once and more our Poet may soar
Clear out of your Worships reach.

O Clarendon Park, and O Clerbury Hill,
Join with your old Friend the River,
To inspire my Muse, and assist my Quill,
In the great things I have to deliver.

School-Mistresses fine, to the number of Nine,
Ile call on no Muses but you;
Nor no other help to enter my Whelp,
Unless it be a bouncing Pru.

Encourage you Ten, the most timorous Pen
That e'er such a task did begin:
When you find any wit, then in my mouth spit,
And chuck me under the chin.

I will not forget those Stones that are set
In a round, upon Salisbury Plains;
Though who brought 'em there, 'tis hard to declare,
The Romans, Merlins or Danes.

Nor those pretty Sheep, whom greater Beasts keep,
Nor you Butards that stalk thereby:
You Butards that chuse to do like my Muse,
Who walks because he can't fly.

Nor you that know all the diseases of Eyes,
And for all a cure remedy find;
Who alone give light, after twenty years night,
To those who are born stone-blind.

Nor you the good Bishop that came from the West,
And spared neither pains nor cost,
To build up the Houle, pull'd down by Prick-louse,
And fit it for such an Host.

'Twas you that let in St. Burien Streams
To increase the small River Ex:
'Twas you brought again the lost Badge and Chain,
And did it to Sarum annex.

You first made the Salisbury men understand
Their River might easily be taught
To bear Ships up and down, and enrich the Town,
And you were the first at it wrought.

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'Twas you that kept up the Citizens hearts,
Or the Giants had over-born 'em;
For them you did ride, for them you replied,
'Twas you brought their Vessels to Hornbam.

But when will this paltry Poet begin,
And shew us a touch of his Art?
With a cup of old Sack, he'll wind up his Jack,
And 'twang it i' th' Second Part.

It should have been a Glass of Claret, if Ryme would have permitted,
His Engin wherewith he makes verses; so chaunt, As winding up makes a Jack go,
Good wine makes good verses flow. 'Twas a very emphatical word, but not easily translated; it signifies as much as *clatter* in French, or *rimbar* in Italian.

The Second PART to the same Tune.

Old Sarum was built on a dry barren Hill,
A great many years ago.
'Twas a Roman Town of strength and renown,
As its stately Ruins show.

Therein was a Castle for men of Arms,
And a Cloister for men of the Gown;
There were Friars and Monks, and Liers and Punks,
'Though not any whose names are come down.

The Soldiers and Church-men did not long agree,
For the furly men with the Hilt on
Made sport at the gate, with the Priests that came late
From a thriving the Nuns of Wilton.

Whereupon Bishop Poor went to the King,
And told him his piteous tale,
That rather than abide such a thorn in his side,
He'd build a new Church in the Vale.

Ile build a new Church in the Vale, said he,
If your Highness will give me a scope.
Who I? said the King, Ile not do such a thing,
Without our old Father the Pope.

Then Ile go to that Whore, replied Bishop Poor,
With a Purse full of good old Gold;
For why should I beg and make a low leg,
Where every thing is to be sold?

He went, he prevail'd, he return'd in a trice,
With ample Authority seiz'd,
To remove Sarum's Stones, and St. Osmond's Bones,
And to build a new Church where he pleas'd.

To the Abbess of Wilton he shewed his Bull,
And how much he was in the Popes grace;
Though they two consulted their bellies full,
Yet they could not agree of a place.

One time as this Prelate lay on his Down-Bed,
Recruiting his Spirits with rest,
There appear'd, as 'tis said, a beautiful Maid,
With her own dear Babe at her breast.

To him thus she spake, (the day was scarce broke,
And his eyes yet to slumber did yield)
Go build me a Church without any delay,
Go build it in Merry-field.

He awakes and he rings, up ran Monks and Friars
At the sound of his little Bell.
I must know, said he, where Merry-field is,
But the Devil a bit could they tell.

Full early he arose on a Morning gray,
To meditate and to walk;
And by chance overheard a Soldier on the Guard
As he thus to his fellow did talk.

I will lay on the side of my good Yewen Bow,
That I shoot clean over the Corn,
As far as that Cow in Merry-field,
Which grazes under the thorn.

Then the Bishop cried out, Where is Merry-field?
For his mind was still on his Vow.
The Soldier reply'd, By the River-side,
Where you see that brindle Cow.

Upon this he declared his pious intent,
And about the Indulgences ran,
And brought in bad people to build a good Steeple,
And thus the Cathedral began.

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The Principal Stones in a fortunate hour,
For the Pope, King and some of the Poets,
Were laid by Pandulfo's Legantine Power,
And 'twas finish'd in thirty years.

Then the men of Old Sarum came down from their Hill,
Where there was neither Well nor Spring;
That they might have a Mill, and water at will,
And hear the sweet Fishes sing.

But if I proceed, as I once had decreed,
And foolishly undertook,
To let my vein run, I shall never have done,
And instead of a Song make a Book.

O pardon me, pardon me, Bishop Ward,
For putting thy name in my Song;
For I am alas but a silly Bard,
And my Verses cannot live long.

Though sometimes a lucky Ballad may hit,
And in spite of times Iron Fangs,
Outlive greater Volumes stuff'd fuller of wit,
And conceiv'd with more labour and pangs.

But if I was owner of Virgil's Tromp-
ette and Horace's well-tuned Lyre,
I'd wear 'em out to the very slump,
But I'd make thy great name to aspire.

Then answer'd my Muse, with a scornful smile
Leave off such fond thoughts, Poor heart,
'Tis fanfic and skill, not love and good-will,
Must fit thee for such a part.

I'll make it the care of the ages to come,
When thou shalt be dead and forgotten,
To publish his fame, and embalm his name,
That it never shall be forgotten.

While Lovers shall languish betwixt hopes and fears,
With a village pale, blue and forlorn:
And all the world round, any wife may be found,
Whose dear Husband drinks in a Horn.

While the River of Avon runs down to the Sea,
And Grass grows on Salisbury Plain,
While Englishmen dance to the Musick of France,
And Tradesmen mind nothing but gain.

While the English follow the French fashions,
This sort of Description is frequent both in Antient and Modern Poets:
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